

## **BioBlitz 2017 Report**

Participation in Bioblitz 2017, April 28/29/30 came in just shy of 100 participants, with 836 hours of in-kind time donated to the event; wow!!!

Twenty group e-mails of thanks, on behalf of FTCCIS, have gone out.

33 youth participants; 11 of whom participated in the new mentorship program

28 adult participants; 175 hr in-kind by 6 parents

5 FTCCIS directors; 123 hr supervision in-kind + 270 hr facilitation in-kind

11 professional mentors; 91 hr in-kind

8 naturalists/educators; 69 hr in-kind

8 youth leaders; 108 hr in-kind

### **Registration**

The new registration process certainly set the tone for the level of responsibility that FTCCIS was looking for. Andrew and Christine will have a better sense, than myself, of where to tweek the model for next year. I referred many eager participants to them for registration upon arrival in camp; mostly adults who expressed concern at having missed the registration deadline.

### **Supervision**

Supervision in camp appeared to fluctuate with some parents casually leaving the supervision of their children to the parents dedicated to being in camp for the weekend. Supervision in the field met the standards that I was working towards.

### **Medical**

Any event that gathers so many people together and administers only a few bandages for toe cuts/snubs, is a success in my books! There were ample first aid supplies in camp and kits carried in the field. Tamara Macphail, our dedicated first aid responder, was always with the majority of youth, with a VHF on site and a vehicle in camp for emergency evacuation. The life ring and throw rope at the bridge need to be augmented with a powerful light for night use.

### **Mentorship Program**

The mentorship program was 1 of 2 of my personal highlight this year. 11 youth were invited to participate and their 9 mentors engaged them professionally. This is a brilliant program for FTCCIS as it puts our youth together with professionals in the province on an annual basis. Entomologists one year, lichenologists the next! I was really impressed with what the youth picked up in the morning mentorships with the E-team, and passed on to fellow youth in the afternoon field groups. I am taking a mentorship next year!

## Youth Leaders

My second highlight was the participation of so many young adult Cortes youth who were so eager to participate! Youth leading youth is a mentorship in itself, for both participants. The younger youth were inspired by the participation of the adult youth. The adult youth were empowered by their participation with the younger youth! This will be a feature of all future Children's Forest BioBlitzes!

## Wilderness Skills

I initially planned a primitive skills workshop for Saturday morning, for youth attending the weekend campout, but targeted instructors were not available. We will definitely be having this workshop next year!!! The glaring lack of skills the youth demonstrated in the arena of camp skills and wilderness etiquette indicates an exciting and essential area for us to focus on in future years. If we want to encourage youth to spend time in nature, they need the skills to safely and happily be in nature during sunshine AND sou'easters!!!!!! Bill Wheeler, Ryan Harvey and Alex Bernier will be supporting this work next year.

## Camp Logistics

While many of us were in ceremony with Kristen, the parents in camp were debriefing and organizing themselves for future years. Ryan Harvey has shared their conversation with me and it is exciting to have the parents so engaged!!! Eg. they are discussing cooperating on group dinners, so that every youth has a hot meal in camp in the evenings and this will result in a reduction of gear to be transported in. We have not only successfully engaged the youth but their parents as well; well done!!

## Expenses

85.40	miscellaneous camp supplies from toilet paper... to generator fuel
199.94	E-team transportation victoria-cortes/ return, for 5
50.00	honourarium libby & rick avis (who turned down travel expenses)
50.00	honourarium frank & maureen boas (ditto)
150.00	3 x 50.00 to each driver providing transport to/ from camp
50.00	gift certificate tosh harvey for outstanding contributions
<b>\$585.34</b>	<b>TOTAL expenses BioBlitz 2017</b>

I will be purchasing essential field guides and some basic field viewing equipment for future field work with youth, from the BioBlitz Benefit funds, but we will still have a strong nest egg for Bioblitz 2018!

Onwards!

Sabina Leader Mense

May 5, 2017